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USSR Weekly Review

14 December 1977

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This publication is prepared by the USSR Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis, with occasional contributions from other offices within the National Foreign Assessment Center. The views presented are the personal judgments of analysts on significant events or trends in Soviet foreign and domestic affairs. Although the analysis centers on political matters, it discusses politically relevant economic or strategic trends when appropriate. Differences of opinion are sometimes aired to present consumers with a range of analytical views. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles or to [redacted]

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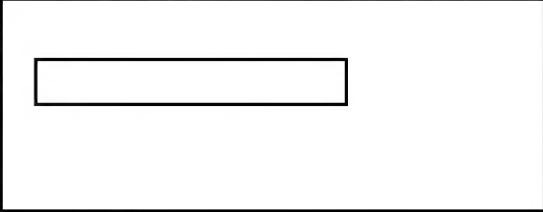
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Some Unofficial Rumblings on Soviet-US Relations

Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Zemskov, who is rumored to be a candidate for the Ministry's number two post and a favorite of Foreign Minister Gromyko, has been making some discordant comments about US foreign policy. His unofficial remarks, made during recent contacts with Western diplomats, may have been designed strictly for effect. If based on conviction, however, his statements may indicate the existence of an important body of opinion within the Foreign Ministry that is far more critical of current US policy than was previously supposed.

In expressing his views on US policy, Zemskov's medium and message have been equally intriguing. While officially responsible for Scandinavia, West Germany, Canada, and Basket III at CSCE, Zemskov has made increasingly frequent forays into the province of Deputy Minister Georgiy Korniyenko (responsible for US matters), using contacts with Western officials to communicate his "personal" displeasure with the policies of the Carter administration. He expressed "intense anger at Carter and the Americans" on the whole issue of disarmament

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later told [redacted] the Soviets were "furious" over President Carter's report to the CSCE Commission.

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Zemskov's most emotional outburst came during a

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[redacted] he told [redacted] that the human rights issue raised by President Carter is the basis of a new policy, "basically determined by the CIA," aimed at establishing American superiority over the Soviet Union. Zemskov, who has been described as the liaison between the Foreign Ministry and the KGB for administrative and personnel matters, complained that the CIA is actively engaged in recruiting agents in the Soviet Union and is trying to "undermine the Soviet system by propaganda and by the introduction of new strategic and tactical weapons systems." He defended the Soviet Union's record on human rights, claiming that Soviet authorities arrest only

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citizens actively engaged in subversive activities. Zemskov referred to Stalin as "a great man" and assured [redacted] that all persons arrested in the Soviet Union were charged with real crimes against the State, he said if he had his way, in fact, there would be "plenty more arrests."

A Deputy Minister since 1973, Zemskov has always been more of an administrator than a diplomat, and the intemperance of his remarks is not inconsistent with his hard-line reputation. (Scandinavian officials have described him as a "bulldozer" and a "tough customer.") That his "personal" diatribes against US policy have been allowed to continue, however, may say something about the support such views have in the Foreign Ministry.

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